

A. Project Identifiers

- 1) **Award Number:** NA16FX1423
- 2) **Grant Program/CFDA #:** Marine Mammal Data Program, 11.439
- 3) **Name of Recipient Organization:** The Alaska Sea Otter and Steller Sea Lion Commission
- 4) **Principle Investigator:** Lianna Jack
- 5) **Project Title:** Traditional Knowledge of Steller Sea Lions and Community-Based Monitoring of Local Seasonal Haul-outs
- 6) **Funding:** **Federal:** \$ 475, 855 **Match:** \$ 0
- 7) **Award Period:** **From:** August 1, 2001 **To:** July 31, 2004
- 8) **Period Covered by this Report:** **From:** August 1, 2001 **To:** January 31, 2002

B. Project Summary

The Alaska Sea Otter and Steller Sea Lion Commission proposes in partnership with 10 coastal communities to develop and implement a *Traditional Knowledge of Steller Sea Lions and Community-Based Monitoring of Local Seasonal Haulouts*, in an effort to strengthen local management of marine mammals and further the involvement of local people in research and management.

The survey will encompass past and present cultural and ecological knowledge of Stellers specific to the local area. Local involvement is crucial to the development, accuracy and success of the survey. Collecting information from hunters and coastal village members can provide an important, longer-time scale review of changes. Such a review of these historical changes is not possible using current scientific studies, but yet it is necessary to view these events within the context of change.

Catastrophic events such as oil spills or earthquakes bring about dramatic, rapid change. Typically, change occurs at a much slower pace, with small changes occurring season after season, and year after year. Only by living in concert with the ecosystem can these seasonal and yearly changes be determined. The unique and valuable knowledge that coastal people hold about the distribution, health and abundance of Stellers is an untapped resource. The project has two phases.

The first phase begins with a Traditional Knowledge of Steller Sea Lion Survey, targeting coastal people who interact with Stellers, the participating community would survey hunters,

subsistence users, commercial and sport fishers, tour and charter boat operators, beachcombers, artists and coastal pilots.

During phase one, over two years, the Commission will hold two workshops, one each year. Each workshop will have team members from five participating communities. Workshop focus will be to develop and finalize the *Traditional Knowledge of Steller Sea Lion Health and Abundance Survey*. The survey team will consist of one or more representatives from each participating community, a Steller sea lion researcher, a social scientist and TASSC Commissioners. Following the workshop, a pilot shall be conducted, then the Community Surveyors will implement the surveys in their community. The results will be compiled into a draft report and a GIS will be compiled of the spatial information. The results will be verified through community presentations. Following verification, the results and report will be finalized.

During the second phase, TASSC staff will develop a *Community-Based Monitoring of Local Seasonal Haulout Protocols* based on the most cost-effective and appropriate measures of locally conducted abundance studies. This will become a tool to strengthen the participating community's ability for local management of marine mammals and further local people's involvement in research.

Depending on findings from the Traditional Knowledge Survey, a single monitoring methodology or multiple methodologies may evolve. Working with a maximum 3 communities, TASSC staff and Community Team Member/s will pilot the monitoring protocol for each of the three main abundance study methodologies if identified as appropriate through the *Community-Based Monitoring Protocols*: aerial, boat-based, and shore-based. The protocols will be evaluated and refined. Lastly, a workshop will be held with all participants to evaluate the *Community-Based Monitoring of Local Seasonal Haulouts Protocol*, plan protocol implementation and discuss the overall findings of the project.

C. Summary of Progress and Results

The following provides a summary of information on the progress and results of the project.

Objectives

Two objectives were engaged during this period of performance, specifically:

1. Develop and finalize the *Traditional Knowledge Survey of Steller Sea Lion Health and Abundance Survey* to include, but not limited to the following:
 - Changes in predator and prey species
 - Changes or increases in killer whale predation over time on Steller sea lions
 - Changes in the quality of subsistence hunted sea lion meat/fat/organs
 - Changes in distribution and abundance
 - Identification of government authorized eradication locations-areas and estimates of how many animals were eradicated
 - Local seasonal haulout identification and associated changes over time (Years 1 and 2).

2. Implement the survey in the 10 participating Alaska coastal communities (Years 1 and 2).

Scheduled Tasks

The tasks scheduled to implement these objectives during the period of performance include planning for and holding the first survey development workshop with the first group of participating communities, the survey trial, survey implementation by the communities and production and distribution of the first semi-annual newsletter.

Task Activities

The following activities were undertaken by the Commission to achieve the scheduled tasks during the performance period.

The Commission selected Donna Willoya to coordinate the project, while I provide project oversight. The first scheduled task involved workshop coordination. During August, September and October, Donna worked on planning and scheduling the workshop. Donna secured bids for the workshop locations, lined up presenters and worked on travel arrangements for the participants and the Commission Board.

During the planning process, it became clear that October would not allow for full participation due to conflicts with other meetings. The dates November 12-13 was selected for the *Wiinaq Program: Traditional Knowledge of Steller Sea Lions and Community-Based Monitoring of Local Seasonal Haulouts* Survey Development workshop.

The communities of St. George, Unalaska, Cordova, Old Harbor and Ouzinkie committed to participating in the first year of this project, and identified their Community Surveyor. Selected to participate in the project were:

- Cordova – Mike Webber
- Old Harbor – Rolf Christiansen
- Ouzinkie – Larry Chichenoff
- St. George – Heather Lekanof
- Unalaska – Helen Lekanoff

The week before the workshop was scheduled, Larry Chichenoff notified the Commission that due to unexpected developments in Ouzinkie, he would be unable to attend the survey development workshop and could not travel for two weeks. It was decided that since the Commission had already purchased an airline ticket for his travel, Larry would come to Anchorage following the workshop for training and to discuss the survey. This is discussed further in the next section.

In addition to the participating communities and the Commission Board, also slated for participation at the survey development workshop were a social scientist and a Steller sea lion biologist. Robi Craig, anthropologist for the Sitka Tribe of Alaska agreed to participate as the social scientist, and Brian Fadely, biologist with the NOAA National Marine Mammal Laboratory agreed to participate as the Steller sea lion biologist.

The workshop was held at the Anchorage Downtown Marriott. Seventeen people were in attendance throughout the meeting. The workshop participant list is attached.

Traditional knowledge surveys have been conducted for many years in a wide variety of ways. The workshop agenda (attached) was intended to guide people through the process and to provide a basis for discussions and the design of the Wiinaq Survey.

Following presentation of the Commission and the project, four presentations were given on different traditional knowledge surveys that have been conducted utilizing different methods. Each of the four surveys derive from different motivations, utilizing different data collection methodologies over different time periods. Following the presentations, discussion turned to the development of survey questions. The question development phase of the workshop lasted into Tuesday morning. The workshop closed with discussion of logistics and timelines.

Following the workshop, Commission staff formatted and sent out electronic and hardcopy versions of the developed survey questions. Each community piloted the survey on a few individuals before embarking on the survey full swing. This was decided to be preferable than Commission Staff conducting a pilot, for Commission staff weren't the people responsible for implementing the survey in the communities. Rather, it was more appropriate for the community surveyor to pilot the survey using his/her own survey style. We have not had reports back that the survey needs to be changed.

All communities with exception of Ouzinkie have begun their surveys. Ouzinkie will be discussed in the next section.

Changes in Goals/Objectives

No goals or objectives changed during the reporting period.

Products

Participants were provided a workshop binder containing program information, contacts, each of the traditional knowledge surveys discussed and the developed survey questions. A copy of the binder will be forwarded for this report via post.

D. Problems

The following will detail the circumstances of any problem the Commission has experienced that prevented the completion of any scheduled task, describe the actions taken to resolve the issue, and explain any special problems or difference between budgeted and actual expenditures.

The major problem the Commission has experienced is with Ouzinkie. As stated above, Ouzinkie committed to the Commission to participate in this project. In October, we met with a Native Village of Ouzinkie staff member to discuss the program. Through following discussions, Larry Chichenoff was identified as the person to participate and conduct the survey.

Travel was arranged for Larry to attend the workshop, but he was unable to attend at the last minute due to circumstances beyond his control. We discussed having him travel to Anchorage to work with Commission staff on the project before implementing the survey, but due to the timing and closeness of the workshop, with all the associated preparation, did not pick a date.

Following the survey, due to staff commitments, those of Ouzinkie, and the holiday season, we planned to reconnect with folks from Ouzinkie mid-January following the Russian holidays. Following conversations, we planned to meet in Anchorage during the Forum for the Environment early February. But, during the Forum, that was not possible.

The Native Village of Ouzinkie sees the value of this program and want it still to occur this year. We have confirmed their participation and are working with Larry and the Native Village of Ouzinkie staff to set a date that he can travel to Anchorage to work with Commission staff on the project before implementing the survey in Ouzinkie. We anticipate working with Larry during the first or second week of March, with immediate survey implementation following his return. While we anticipate some impact on our timeline, we do not think this will drastically delay progress.

Lastly, we have held off on sending out the semi-annual newsletter until we had solidified the path we are taking with Ouzinkie. We are planning on March or April for the newsletter.

There is minimal difference between the projected expenditures and actual expenditures. Travel costs for the workshop totaled less than expected. Additionally, the delay of contractual costs for Ouzinkie and the newsletter not being sent out resulted in lower expenditures than expected. We anticipate these to be compensated for in this quarter.

This concludes my semi-annual report for the Alaska Sea Otter and Steller Sea Lion Commission.

**Survey Development Workshop Participants
November 12-13, 2001
Anchorage Downtown Marriott
Anchorage, Alaska**

Name	Community	
1. Gwen Christiansen	Old Harbor	Community Surveyor
2. Rolf Christiansen	Old Harbor	Community Surveyor
3. Robi Craig	Sitka	Social Scientist, Presenter, STA
4. Lillian Elvsaas	Seldovia	TASSC Commissioner
5. Brian Fadely	Seattle	Steller sea lion researcher, NMML
6. Dolly Garza	Ketchikan	TASSC Commissioner
7. Lianna Jack	Anchorage	TASSC Staff, Executive Director
8. Susi Kalxdorff	Anchorage	Presenter, Polar Bear TEK, USFWS
9. Mark King	Cordova	TASSC Commissioner
10. Patrick Kosbruk	Perryville	TASSC Commissioner
11. Heather Lekanof	St. George	Community Surveyor
12. Helen Lekanoff	Unalaska	Community Surveyor
13. Jeff Peterson	Old Harbor	TASSC Commissioner
14. George Ramos	Yakutat	TASSC Commissioner
15. Margaret Roberts	Kodiak	TASSC Commissioner
16. Mike Webber	Cordova	Community Surveyor
17. Donna Willoya	Anchorage	TASSC Staff, Project Coordinator

The Alaska Sea Otter and Steller Sea Lion Commission

Wiinaq Program

Traditional Knowledge of Steller Sea Lions Survey Development Workshop Agenda

Monday November 12, 2001

9:00 am	Introductions and Welcome
9:30 am	TASSC Overview of current programs
10:00 am	Wiinaq Program Introduction and Objectives
10:20 am	Wiinaq Program Timeline & Phases <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Phase I:</i> Traditional Knowledge of Steller Sea Lions Health and Abundance Survey• <i>Phase II:</i> Community-Based Monitoring of Local Seasonal Haulouts Protocols
10:45 am	Break
11:00 am	Examples: Other Traditional Knowledge Surveys - 1/2 hr each <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Susi Kalxdorff: Collection of Local Knowledge Regarding Polar Bear Habitat Use in AK - Why, How, When• Robi Craig: Effects of Intertidal Habitat Change ~Traditional Food & Resources Gathering~ - Why, How, When
Noon	Lunch
1:30 pm	Examples: Other Traditional Knowledge Surveys Continued - 1/2 hr each <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TASSC Staff: Inuit Traditional Ecological Knowledge of the Hudson Bay Narwhal (Tuugaalik) Population - Why, How, When• Dolly Garza: Distribution of Sea Otter in Southeast Alaska Using Local Knowledge - Why, How, When
2:30 pm	Break
2:45 pm	Survey Structure Discussion - Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions for survey framework• Why, How and When
5:30 pm	Recess

The Alaska Sea Otter and Steller Sea Lion Commission

Wiinaq Program

Traditional Knowledge of Steller Sea Lions Survey Development Workshop Agenda

Tuesday November 13, 2001

8:30 am	Coffee, tea
9:00 am	Introductions
9: 05 am	Recap of Previous Days Discussion
9:35 am	Survey Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maps, Questionnaire, Tape Recorder, etc.
10:00 am	Logistics
10: 15 am	Break
10:30 am	Individual Community Survey Questions
11:45 am	Closing Discussion
Noon	Adjourn